



March 5, 2003

TO: Paula J. Hammond, Chief of Staff

FROM: Kathleen B. Davis, Highways & Local Programs (H&LP) Division

SUBJECT: H&LP February Supplemental Alert

OPERATIONAL ITEMS

Bridging the Valley

On February 26 FHWA hosted a meeting on the Bridging the Valley project. Participants included Glenn Miles, Executive Director Spokane Regional Transportation Council, WSDOT Eastern Region Local Programs office, H&LP, and FHWA. Glenn Miles explained that the Bridging the Valley project is a 42-mile corridor between Spokane, WA and Athol, ID that creates a common railroad corridor from which Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway and Union Pacific Railroad could operate. The project would eliminate at-grade crossings either through grade separations or closures. The meeting provided an open forum for questions and clarification to ensure compliance with FHWA regulations as the project moves forward.

Introducing *Building Projects that Build Communities*

This month H&LP distributed *Building Projects that Build Communities*, a new handbook to help local agencies and WSDOT work together on transportation projects to meet our citizens' needs. The handbook represents the first product the agency has produced to implement our Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) initiative. CSS are shared, interdisciplinary techniques that involve all partners to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical surroundings and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources and community values, while maintaining safety and mobility.

Building Projects that Build Communities contains chapters on effective communication, project advocacy and management, conflict resolution, how to identify and involve appropriate community partners, keep projects and teams on track, and much more. In addition to very practical project management applications, it contains numerous resources to assist transportation professionals working with communities and others.

This document was produced to (1) expedite projects so they reduce costly delays, (2) address and balance local and regional transportation needs (encouraging partnering), and (3) consider all concerns and issues upfront to prevent redo or rework costs later in the project.

Building Projects that Build Communities has been sent to all public transportation agencies in the state and is available on-line at www.wsdot.wa.gov/biz/csd. It will also be available on the next release of WST2's Publications CD due out later this spring. Contact H&LP's WST2 Center for more information on the CD.

Local Agency Bridge Inspection Training

The annual bridge condition inspection training, developed in cooperation with the WSDOT Bridge Office and FHWA and conducted by H&LP Bridge Engineers, is underway. This training is an important part of a bridge inspector's education and assures that the 7,550 state and local bridges, varying from quite simple to extremely complex structures, are inspected properly, thereby helping to assure they are safe for the traveling public.

A Bridge Condition Inspection Fundamentals (BCIF) class was also held this month in Lacey. This class is a National Highway Institute (NHI) equivalent for bridge technical and maintenance personnel with little or no background in bridges. The Fundamentals class is a prerequisite for the Bridge Condition Inspection Training (BCIT) course.

The Inspection Training course is an intensive two-week course in bridge inspection and the federal requirements of maintaining a bridge program. It fulfills the requirements of the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS) for a comprehensive training course based on FHWA's Bridge Inspector's Reference Manual. The course will be held during the first two weeks of March in Lacey.

Two Bridge Condition Inspection Updates (BCIU) classes were held this month, one in Lacey and one in Ellensburg. The Updates classes are for experienced bridge inspectors. There will be an additional BCIU class in April in Spokane.

Local Agency Guidelines Training Program Adds New Course

Laurel Gray, H&LP T2 Center Training Program Coordinator, and Ron Pate, H&LP Standards Engineer, worked with members of WSDOT Real Estate Services on the implementation of the "Appraisal Review Overview" course. This course fulfills a requirement for local agency employees who perform appraisal reviews for local agency projects that use federal highway funds.

Currently two classes are scheduled in April and another in July of this year. More class dates will be added based on demand. For detailed information on the classes, visit the following link: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/TA/T2Center/Training/AppraisalReview.pdf>

GOOD NEWS ITEM

2002 Crystal Mouse Awards Presented!



Left to Right:

Al Baza, Oak Harbor; Larry Stritmatter, WSDOT SW Region, Chehalis;
Keith Jameson, Oak Harbor; Ed McNeill, Oak Harbor;
Jack Moltz, WSDOT SW Region, Chehalis; Ken Willms (back) Douglas County;
Jack Sprague, WSDOT SW Region, Chehalis; Lyle Eggers, Douglas County;
Paul Simonsen, WSDOT SW Region, Chehalis; Robert Mires, Douglas County;
Dave Mires, Douglas County; Dell Mires, Douglas County

Secretary of Transportation Doug MacDonald presented the 2002 Crystal Mouse Awards at the February Transportation Commission meeting. The Awards are sponsored by the Washington State Technology Transfer (WST2) Center to recognize those who develop outstanding inventions that improve safety, reduce costs and increase efficiency. The Awards include three categories: the Best Tool and the Best Equipment winners are voted by the attendees of the Pacific Northwest Transportation Technology Expo and the Best Idea Published in the WST2 newsletter is selected by the WST2 Advisory Committee.

At the 2002 Pacific Northwest Transportation Technology Expo, the city of Oak Harbor's Jack Hammer Storage Unit received the most votes in the Best Tool category and Douglas County took the honors in the Best Equipment category with their Gravel Road Maintainer. WSDOT's Chehalis Maintenance Shop received the award for the Best Idea Published in the WST2 in 2002 for the Under Guardrail Cleaner.

Best Tool for 2002 - Keith Jameson's Jackhammer Storage Unit, City of Oak Harbor

This easy-access storage unit was made to fit into the cabinet of a utility box that is mounted waist high on a pickup bed. The storage compartment creates a tidy, secure place to store the jackhammer and bits together, saving time previously spent searching for the bits, and improving safety by eliminating the need to lift the heavy jackhammer from the back of a pickup.

Inventor & Fabricator:
Supervisor:

Keith Jameson, Street Specialist II
Ed McNeill, Lead Street Specialist

Public Works Superintendent: Cathy Rosen

Best Equipment for 2002 - Douglas County's Gravel Road Maintainer

This is a remote-operated hydraulic mini-road grader with a spring tooth moldboard that is towed behind a pickup. The Gravel Road Maintainer improves efficiency and quality of work by maintaining gravel roads. Because the unit can be adjusted from within the truck, it also improves the safety of the traveling public by maintaining traffic flow during gravel road maintenance operations.

Inventors & Fabricators:	Ken Willms, Fleet Systems Manager, Lyle Eggers, Parts Coordinator Dave Mires, Lead Mechanic Robert Mires, Mechanic Dell Mires, Mechanic
Supervisor:	Ken Willms, Fleet Systems Manager
Public Works Director:	Jim Barker

Best Idea Published in the WST2 in 2002 - Jack Moltz and Daryl Sprague's Under Guardrail Cleaner, WSDOT Southwest Region, Chehalis Maintenance Shop

The Under Guardrail Cleaner is a large bar mounted horizontally to the bucket of a mini-excavator. It removes debris and road sand from under guardrails and reshapes the roadway shoulder. The Under Guardrail improves safety by reducing exposure of crews to traffic. The unit increases efficiency by reducing the number of people necessary to do the work (from 8 crew members to 3), increasing the speed of the work (from 1,000 feet per day to over 5,200 feet per day), maintaining traffic flow by not requiring closure of a traffic lane, and allowing day operations.

Inventors:	Jack Moltz, Maintenance Lead Tech. and Daryl Sprague, Maintenance Tech III
Fabricator:	Bob Steel, Mechanic
Maintenance Supervisor:	Larry Stritmatter
Maintenance Superintendent:	Paul Simonsen
Operations Manager:	Richard Sjolander
Regional Administrator:	Donald R. Wagner

OTHER ITEM OF INTEREST

An Addition to the H&LP Staff

This month Candace Jochim joined the H&LP staff as an Environmental Engineer. She has worked in a variety of Environmental positions over the last several years. Candace comes from WSDOT's SW Region where she prepared various environmental permit applications for the SW Maintenance program. Before this, she worked for Oregon DOT where she helped produce complex NEPA documents. She has also worked for a consultant producing environmental documents. Candace has a solid perspective on environmental processes and

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how they relate to both project delivery and local agency impacts, and comes highly recommended as a welcome addition to our team.

KBD.kmc

cc: WSDOT Executive List
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